DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 217 036 SP 020 364

AUTHOR Arends, Richard I.
TITLE Beginning Teachers as Learners: A Descriptive Report.
PUB DATE Mar 82
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New York, NY, March, 1982).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Beginning Teachers; Followup Studies; *Independent Study; Inservice Teacher Education; *Learning Experience; *Professional Continuing Education; Secondary Education; *Secondary School Teachers; Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Characteristics; *Teaching Experience

ABSTRACT

A followup study of beginning secondary school teachers was conducted to determine the nature and extent of their involvement in professional continuing education activities and their attitudes toward their experiences in these activities. Thirty-four beginning teachers were interviewed at the end of their first year of teaching and again at the end of their third or fourth year. They were asked to recall learning activities they had participated in, to describe attributes of those activities, and to make judgments about each experience. It was found that 18 categories of learning experiences could be identified (workshops, night classes, clinics, seminars, summer school, etc.), and that participation was extensive. While night classes and summer school accounted for the largest portion of hours of learning experiences, other types of experiences were sought. The types of learning experiences that received the most favorable responses were those that were highly individualized or very practical; such as solving particular problems and developing classroom materials in clinics and workshops. There was favorable response to experiences when beginners themselves were asked to make presentations or perform in a leadership capacity. A rather surprising finding was that the teachers from this sample appeared to feel that, the further away from their own school site the learning experience was held, the more satisfied they felt with it and the more applicable they saw it to their teaching. College personnel and administrators or curriculum specialists were found to be the least preferred trainers, and teachers and consultants were the most preferred. Learning experiences undertaken for personal satisfaction or personal growth were highly rated. The teachers most actively involved in outside learning experiences were rated as most competent by their superiors. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED217036

BEGINNING TEACHERS AS LEARNERS:

A DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

A Paper

for

American Educational Research Association
Annual Meeting, New York

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Richard I. Arends

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

By

Richard I. Arends
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403

March, 1982

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

SP 020 364

BEGINNING TEACHERS AS LEARNERS

The process for preparing secondary teachers in the United States is one that encourages beginners to enter the profession with relatively little training and one that assumes they will continue as learners during their induction period and until status as fully competent professionals is attained. For some aspects of how this process works, we have a rather complete information base. For example, we know that college-based preservice programs across the country are very similar and consist for the most part of requiring teachers in training to major in a specialty area, to take limited course work in human development, history or philosophy of education, and teaching methods and to complete some type of clinical experience, normally a term of student teaching. We also know that beginners leave their preservice preparation and face difficult and trying times during the first years of teaching. Kevin Ryan and his colleagues (1980) have done an excellent job of documenting the trials and tribulations faced by beginners and the adjustments they are forced to make to survive. A decade of teacher socialization studies (Lortie, 1975, McDonald, 1981, and Isaacson, 1981) show that limited support exists for beginners and that for the most part they perceive themselves as working things out pretty much on their own.

From the research of Bruce Joyce and his team (1976), we know that the type of help and opportunities for growth that are provided for teachers through inservice and continuing education are perceived

by just about everyone in a nationwide sample as "weak, impoverished and a relative failure" (Joyce, et.al., p. xvii). Teachers report dissatisfaction and claim the learning experiences available to them do not address the problems they are experiencing and policy makers express beliefs that unless compelled teachers will not attend to their professional development and growth. Regardless of the perceived failure of the inservice system, however, teachers do continue their learning. We know again from the Joyce studies (1976) that more teachers than in any other time in our history have Ph.D.s (5%), masters degrees (50%) and a large proportion of them are at the top of their district's salary schedule -- all achievements accomplished only by considerable investment in continuing education.

What we don't know very much about is the nature of the learning experiences provided for and sought by beginners on their way to full professional status. We know little, if anything about the extent and character of the kinds of assistance and training available; we havenot attempted to categorize these along any dimensions that might be relevant such as those experiences beginners choose to take on their own versus those that are required or those taken on college campus versus those taken in their own district or elsewhere. Neither do we know very much about the specifics of the dissatisfaction and dissillusionment reported by teachers nor the characteristics of teachers themselves that may account for continued learning.

This gap in our knowledge base pushed us to inquire into the learning experiences of beginning teachers and seek answers to several

questions. Specifically, (1) if no one is perceived as being responsible for the continuing education of teachers as described by Lortie (1975), McDonald (1980), and Isaacson (1981), yet we find a great deal of continuing education occuring as Joyce (1976) has argued, what is the nature and extent of these efforts (2) If teachers in general report dissatisfaction with the whole process of continuing education, can we pinpoint a bit more precisely some of the features of this dissatisfaction, and finally, (3) are there characteristics of teachers themselves that may account for their continued learning?

METHODS

This investigation was part of a larger set of activities undertaken to follow up and study graduates from the University of Oregon. Over several years, members of the faculty and doctoral students have attempted to assess the effectiveness of their institution's Secondary Teacher Education Program, to describe the competencies and career patterns of graduates and to study the experiences of beginning secondary teachers. (See Arends and Bullock, 1976; Arends, Hesse, Wheeler and Garrett, 1978; Arends, 1979; Isaacson, Arends et. al., 1981, and Isaacson, 1981)

Subjects

Forty-three secondary teachers who graduated from the University of Oregon in 1976 and 1977 comprised the initial sample for this study. Beginners were chosen at random from the total population of graduates who completed the program during that period and who obtained a teaching position within a 150-mile radius of the university immediately or within a few months following graduation. Attrition and incomplete information on some subjects reduced the sample to 34 beginners who provided data for this particular study.

Data Collection

Information from and about each graduate in the sample was collected twice -- at the end of their first year of teaching and again at the completion of approximately the fourth year for the 1976 graduates and the third year for the 1977 graduates. The exact amount of teaching

varied because the final round of data collection was spread over several months and because some members of the sample started their full-time teaching in mid-year rather than September.

At the end of year one, each graduate was visited by a member of the research team, observed for two class periods and interviewed. The beginner's immediate supervisor (principal, or in larger systems, the department chair) was also interviewed and asked to provide information about the beginner's performance. At the end of year three or year four, one researcher, Isaacson, visited 34 subjects from the original sample of 43. For those who had left teaching, during the survey period, interviews were conducted about their new careers and factors that prompted that choice. For those that remained in teaching, interviews were again conducted and measures of their teaching performance collected from supervisors.

Several instruments were used for the larger study and they are described in some detail elsewhere. (See Arends, 1978 and Isaacson, Arends et.al., 1981.) Two instruments -- The Professional Development Questionnaire and The Teacher Competency Inventory (principal version) -- were used to collect information for this study and will be described in the report.

RESULTS

Nature of the Learning Experiences of Beginners

If teachers leave the colleges and universities without all the requisite understanding and skills for teaching, do they continue as

learners during the early years? If they do, what is the nature of those experiences? We were able to obtain that kind of information from the 34 beginners in our sample. In a personal interview we ask each to do three things: (1) to recall learning activities they had participated in during their three years of teaching (2) describe selected attributes of those activities and (3) to make judgments about each learning experience. We encouraged individuals to consider a broad range of learning experiences and not to confine their responses to formal courses or workshops. However in our final analysis we included only those experiences we termed "deliberate and professionally-related learning." By deliberate we mean that the experience had to be planned and with a particular objective in mind. By professional we mean related to the teacher's work as opposed to experience that satisfies personal or recreational purposes. Unlike other studies of professional continuing education (Castel and Storey, 1968), we did not include general reading to keep up or prepare for day-to-day work. Nor were we as liberal as Tough (1971, 1978) in including the wide range of learning efforts that many adults pursue as a part of normal living. We also used a conservative definition of reported instances of educational travel. For example, a trip to Europe mainly for pleasure was not included. At the same time, a trip to Mexico by a Spanish teacher to improve here conversational Spanish was viewed as deliberate and professionally related.

From the vast array of learning experiences reported, we identified 18 categories displayed and defined in Chart 1 on the following page. For

Chart 1

Definitions of 18 Categories of Learning Experiences Reported by Beginning Teachers

Name	Definition
Clinics:	A group meeting of teachers where specific problems are examined and discussed and concrete skills are acquired. Topics may vary but in our sample normally pertained to physical education, coaching, or outdoor education.
Community Study:	Opportunities provided for teachers either alone or in a group to understand the community in which they teach. Instances reported in our sample were tours arranged by local school personnel or some community group.
Conferences:	A formal meeting where topics in a particular area are presented and discussed. Normally sponsored by subject matter specialty associations and no more than a day or two in duration.
Curriculum Work:	Opportunities at the local or state level for teachers to construct curriculum guides or materials and/or to influence selection of textbooks. We included only instances where the arrangement was formal and where training was associated with the experience. e.g. Serving on a State Textbook Adoption Committee where a materials analysis procedure was learned.
Educational Travel:	Travel to other parts of the country or the world that enhances the teacher's ability to teach a particular subject or topic. e.g. foreign language teachers visiting the country where the language they teach is spoken. We did not include travel for personal or recreational purposes.
Faculty Study Groups:	Formal meetings of members of a school faculty where specific problems are studied and considered. We did not include regular faculty business meetings.
Field Testing Materials:	Situations where teachers are asked to test new educational materials or approaches and required to learn about the materials and/or approaches prior to the test.
Field Trips:	A visit made by teachers to other schools for the purpose of firsthand observation of some practice or procedure.
Independent Study:	A situation where a teacher studied some topic in depth and on their own for the purpose of improving their ability to teach that topic. We did not include normal reading to keep up with a field or to perform day-to-day work.
New Teacher Orientations:	Special sessions conducted by employing districts for the purpose of acquainting beginning teachers with the policies and procedures of the district, building and of the school's curriculum approaches and/or community.
Night Classes:	Formal classes or coursework taken by teachers in the evening during the school year. For the most part these were part of some college or university's continuing education program and carried graduate credit.
Observations:	A visit made by teachers to other classrooms for the purpose of firsthand experience of another teacher's approach or for observing some practice or procedure.
Presentations/Performances:	A situation where teachers give formal speeches or music performances and require special preparation and learning.
Private Lessons:	Special training for a individual teacher in a particular topic or skill provided by another individual. Most instances reported by music teachers.
Technical Assistance:	Instances where teachers receive special and individualized help from a principal, supervisor or other school or university personnel.
Student Teaching Supervision:	Situations where teachers are asked to supervise and work with a college student in teacher training program and that requires learning helping and supervision skills.
Summer School:	Formal classes or coursework taken by teachers on a college or university campus during their summer vacation period.
Workshops:	Special meetings sponsored by a variety of providers where teachers study, discuss specific educational topics and where opportunities are provided to make materials or lessons for use in their own classroom situation.

the most part, the category system we devised allowed accurate independent classification of the various reported learning experiences. Most problematic were decisions about how many of the independent study activities to include and how to classify certain activities called workshops or clinics. Even though our beginning teachers called some activities workshops and others clinics, we suspect that the actual nature of the learning experiences provided in both are really quite similar and the name is more dependent on the subject specialty; P.E. Teachers go to clinics; English Teachers go to workshops.

Extent of Beginner's Learning Experiences

The extent of learning experiences reported by the 34 beginning teachers in our sample is displayed in Tables 1 and 2.

Place Tables 1 and 2 Here

As with the criteria for inclusion, we used rather conservative decision roles for computing the number of hours devoted to an experience or activity. For example:

- If a teacher attended a conference or workshop outside his/her local area, we did not include travel to and from the activity, only the actual hours in attendance.
- If a teacher reported taking a night class or classes during summer school, we counted only face-to-face instructional time, not time that would be required, in most instances, for outside preparation and study.
- If a teacher reported educational travel or field trips, only hours that applied to their specific educational goals were counted.

Table 1

Amount of Professional Development Engaged in by Beginning Teachers

Measurement	N	RANGE	$\bar{X}$
Measured in Number of Activities Reported	356	2- 19	10.47
Measured in Number of Hours	9901	28-951	291.21
	Number of Respondents = 34		

Table 2

Frequency Distribution in Hours of Professional Development
Reported by Beginning Teachers

Hours of Development	N	Percent
Less than 50 Hours	4	11.8
51 to 100 Hours	4	11.8
101 to 200 Hours	5	14.7
201 to 300 Hours	5	14.7
301 to 400 Hours	4	11.8
401 to 500 Hours	9	26.5
More than 500 Hours	3	8.8
TOTAL	34	100.0

As can be observed in Table 1, the 34 beginners reported 356 deliberate learning experiences during the survey period. Together these totaled to almost 10,000 hours of effort on their part. Looking at the range of activities and the frequency distributions provided in Table 2 we find considerable differences among individuals in the sample. For example, one respondent reported as many as 951 hours spent in learning during her first 3 years of teaching as compared to as few as 28 hours reported by another beginner. On the average, beginners participated in ten plus different learning experiences and these amounted to almost 300 hours of effort.

Attributes and Beginners' Judgements of Learning Experiences.

Not only were we interested in the total amount of learning activity engaged in by beginning teachers but also various attributes of these learning experiences, how satisfied beginners were with each experience and how applicable they perceived the experience to be in their teaching.

In Table 3, we have rank ordered the 18 types of learning experiences according to the frequency in which they were reported and displayed the number of hours spent by the total sample for each type of experience.

Place Table 3 Here

As can be observed, the most frequently attended activities were workshops and conferences with night classes and summer school work consuming the most hours. In addition we believe there are several

Table 3

Number of 18 Types of Learning Activities Reported
by Beginning Teachers and Hours Devoted to Each

Type of Learning Activity	Number of Activities and Hours Reported by 34 Teachers			
	N	%	HRS	%
Workshops	83	23.3	1426	14.4
Conferences	80	22.5	894	9.0
Summer School	37	10.4	3266	33.0
Night Classes	36	10.1	1323	13.4
Clinics	33	9.3	1022	10.3
New Teacher Orientations	20	5.6	169	1.7
Curriculum Work	16	4.5	190	1.9
Presentations/Performances	14	3.9	179	1.8
Observations	13	3.7	118	1.2
Technical Assistance	6	1.7	39	>.1
Independent Study	3	.8	667	6.7
Educational Travel	3	.8	276	2.8
Student Teaching Supervision	3	.8	180	1.8
Private Lessons	3	.8	112	1.1
Community Study	2	.6	12	>.1
Field Testing Materials	2	.6	5	>.1
Faculty Study Groups	1	.3	15	>.1
Field Trips	1	.3	8	>.1
TOTALS	356	100[1]	9901	100[1]

[1]Slightly more than 100% due to rounding procedures

interesting and important insights that can be derived from these data:

- Measured in frequency, workshops and conferences account for the highest percentage of learning activities participated in by beginning teachers.
- Measured in hours, teachers participate in night and summer school classes that account for almost 50 percent of the time they spend on learning.
- Less than two-thirds of the teachers reported having experienced special orientation or training for beginners. For those that did have such sessions they were on the average slightly less than one day in length.
- Few beginning teachers observe other teachers, visit other schools or receive first-hand technical assistance.
- Beginners get few opportunities to present or perform for their peers.

Data displayed in Table 4 on the following page has again been categorized by the type of learning experiences reported by beginners and also by where the learning experience was held, who provided the training and what type of incentives were available. These data also show the ratings beginners gave the various experiences according to type, location, trainers and incentives. Mean scores represent the average responses of the 34 subjects on a five-point scale for satisfaction and applicability for the combined number of experiences reported under each attribute. For present descriptive purposes, we have chosen to consider each attribute independently, fully recognizing that a number of the attributes probably interact to produce a rating of satisfaction or applicability for any particular learning experience.

Table 4

Satisfaction and Applicability Ratings of Learning Experiences According to Type, Location, Trainer, and Incentives Rank Ordered on Satisfaction Scale

Attributes of Learning Experiences	N = 323[1]	Percent	Mean Ratings Applicability	Satisfaction
Type of Learning Experience				
Presentations/Performances	14	4.3%	4.79	4.71
Technical Assistance	6	1.9%	4.00	4.34
Clinics	30	9.3%	4.17	4.33
Observations	12	3.7%	3.25	3.83
Workshops	72	22.3%	3.65	3.80
Conferences	74	22.9%	3.30	3.64
Night Classes	33	10.2%	3.40	3.21
Curriculum Committees	15	4.6%	3.80	3.07
Summer School	34	10.5%	2.85	3.00
New Teacher Orientations	19	5.9%	2.84	2.32
Other[2]	14	4.3%	----	----
Location				
Out-of-State	26	8.0%	4.27	4.58
Else-where in State	126	39.0%	3.73	3.87
College Campus	70	21.7%	3.14	3.29
Local (School and District)	94	29.1%	3.24	3.18
Other	7	2.2%	----	----
Trainer Type				
More than one Type	63	19.5%	3.70	3.97
Consultant	61	18.9%	3.56	3.87
Teachers	61	18.9%	3.79	3.76
IHE Faculty	94	29.1%	3.25	3.29
LEA Staff	33	10.2%	3.06	2.67
Other	11	3.4%	----	----
Incentive Provided				
Multi-incentives	17	5.3%	4.71	4.71
Personal Satisfaction	65	20.1%	4.28	4.45
Release Time	110	34.1%	3.38	3.63
Credit	73	22.6%	3.14	3.20
Compulsory	50	15.5%	2.84	2.58
Other	8	2.5%	----	----

[1]Total numbers of learning experiences are slightly less than the 356 reported in Table 3 because respondents were not able to make judgments about a few of the learning experiences or information was missing on the interview schedule.

[2]Learning experiences reported infrequently (e.g. field trips, private lessons) were placed in an "Other Category" for this particular description.

Inspection of the various attributes of the 323 learning experiences along with the ratings they received provide additional insights into the nature of experiences provided for and sought by beginners and how they react to them. When we look again at the type of learning activities we find the same frequency distribution as found in Table 3, namely that the bulk of beginners' learning consists of workshops, conferences, night classes and summer school. However, taken independently of other attributes, there is considerable variability in the way beginners judge the various types of experiences they attend.

Learning experiences that are highly individualized (presentations, technical assistance, observations) and those that are very practical (clinics and workshops) receive the highest ratings whereas more general types of learning experiences (night classes, curriculum committees, and summer school) the lowest. Again we see that only about two-thirds of the sample reported specific new teacher orientations, that these make up only a small portion of the total numbers of activities and were universally dissatisfying to beginners.

When learning experiences are categorized by location and trainer type, it becomes clear that education for beginning teachers is going on in a variety of settings and several different types of leaders are providing that education. The fact that almost 30 percent of learning activities occurred at the local level (school or district) should be satisfying for those who argue for more locally-based emphasis in continuing education. However, the fact that the closer

to home an activity occurs the lower rating it receives may come as a surprise to some. The fact that less than a third of the experiences were led by IHE faculty, that almost 20 percent of the experiences were led by teachers themselves and that these received high ratings indicate higher education no longer is the major actor in the enterprise of continuing education and that teachers are doing quite well on their own.

Released time from work was reported by beginners as the incentives most often provided to encourage participation. They report that only 15 percent of the experiences were engaged in because they were compulsory. Twenty percent of the learning experiences were taken for personal satisfaction. Multiple incentives were present in a few of the learning experiences. These were situations in most instances where the teacher was given release time to pursue a learning experience for their own personal satisfaction. Experiences taken for personal satisfaction or that carried multiple incentives are those reported as most satisfying and applicable to the beginner's work.

Profiles and Features of Avid, Average and Reluctant Participants

As described previously, we found considerable differences among various individuals in the sample as to the amount of time each devoted to learning experiences. This prompted us to look a bit more closely at the learning profiles or the complete range of experiences for specific beginning teachers. In Chart 2 on the following page four specific profiles -- one for an avid participant, two average

Four Beginning Teachers' Learning Profiles

CASE 1 - AN AVID PARTICIPANT - 623 HOURS

Time		Activity	Hours	Location
Year 1 -	Fall	New Teacher Orientation	2	School
	Fall	Oregon Math Conference	8	Portland
	Winter	N. Class - Inter. Communications	30	District
	Spring	N. Class - Teaching Methods	30	Campus
	Summer	Summer School	140	Campus
Year 2	Fall	Northwest Math Conference	16	Seattle
	Winter	N. Class - Teaching Methods	30	Campus
	Spring	Observation at Another School	8	District
	Summer	Summer School	150	Campus
Year 3	Fall	N. Class - Diag. and Remediation	30	District
	Fall	Workshop on Calculators	2	ESD
	Winter	N. Class - Behavior Modification	20	District
	Winter	Workshop on Probability	2	ESD
	Spring	Field Test New Math Materials	3	School
	Spring	Workshop - Prob. Solving, Gifted	2	Teacher Ctr.
	Summer	Summer School	150	Campus

CASE 2 - AN AVERAGE PARTICIPANT - 295 HOURS

Year 1 -	Fall	New Teacher Orientation	8	District
	Fall	Harry Wong Motivation Workshop	4	District
	Fall	Oregon Geography Conference	8	Eugene
	Spring	5 - 2 hour Faculty Development	10	School
	Summer	Summer School	140	Campus
Year 2	Fall	Workshop - Assertive Discipline	4	District
	Fall	Oregon Geography Conference	8	Eugene
	Spring	Fac. Mts. on Assertive Discipline	4	School
	Summer	Summer School	120	Campus
	Summer	Taught Class - Nat. Environ.	30	Campus
Year 3 -	Fall	Oregon Geography Conference	8	Eugene
	Winter	Workshop - Anti-Discrimination	1	District

CASE 3 - AN AVERAGE PARTICIPANT - 360 HOURS

Year 1 -	Fall	State Health and P.E. Conference	8	Portland
	Fall	Organized Tour of Metro Area	4	Portland
	Spring	Soccer Clinic	4	District
Year 2 -	Fall	Madeline Hunter Workshop	8	District
	Fall	State Health and P.E. Conference	8	Eugene
	Winter	Handball Clinic	4	District
	Summer	Summer School	180	Campus
Year 3 -	Fall	Health Curriculum Committee	4	District
	Fall	Conference on Birth Defects	16	ESD
	Spring	Health Curriculum Committee	4	District
	Winter	Workshop - Athletic injuries	4	District
	Spring	Workshop on CRP - Red Cross	8	Portland
	Spring	KGW Health Fair	4	Portland
	Summer	Summer School	100	Campus
	Summer	Physical Fitness Clinic	4	District

CASE 4 - A RELUCTANT PARTICIPANT - 32 HOURS

Year 1 -	Fall	New Teacher Orientation	16	District
	Winter	Workshop - Writing Health Comp.	5	School
Year 2 -	Fall	Workshop on Discipline	4	District
Year 3 -	Winter	Reviewed Materials for Textbook Committee	2	School
	Spring	Workshop on Anti-Discrimination	5	District

cases and one reluctant participant -- are displayed. Looking at specific profiles, one is struck with two features of the nature and extent of the learning experiences of beginning teachers. One, these specific cases highlight the great variability that exists between those that avidly pursue continuing education as compared to those that appear more reluctant. Two, the variety of experiences reported and patterns observed for each individual emphasizes the uniqueness of each beginner's choice and perhaps the heavy influence of the teaching specialty on the type of activities sought by secondary teachers. Note, for example, that in the case of the avid participant we have a math teacher who started taking classes at night, who each year attended conferences in her subject area, returned to school each summer, and took a variety of short workshops in her teaching specialty. This is contrasted with the reluctant participant who essentially participated in five activities -- all of which upon closer inspection were compulsory. The profile for Case 3, one of the average participants and a health and physical education teacher, illustrates a person who in addition to campus-based courses sought out a variety of short, day-long or half-day clinics or workshops that focused specifically on her teaching specialty.

If the extent and pattern of learning is somewhat unique for each beginning teacher are there, however, features that characterize various types of learners? We do not have a very good answer to that question at this time, but one simple, but revealing analysis is compelling. As described previously, information about the beginner's

competence was collected at the end of their first year of teaching from principals or supervisors. This was done by asking supervisors to complete a "Teacher Competency Inventory" that required making judgments about 17 areas of performance on a 5-point scale ranging from exceptionally competent to inadequate. When scores for the items are summed and averaged an overall competency score is obtained.

We found that we had complete information (amount of learning experiences from the Professional Development Questionnaire and supervisor's ratings from the Teacher Competency Inventory) on 24 beginning teachers in the sample.

Table 5 gives the number of hours each of the 24 beginners spent on learning experiences during the first three years of their teaching and the competency rating they received from their principal at the end of their first year.

Place Table 5 here

Computation of Spearman rank correlation between hours of learning experiences and supervisor's ratings produced a coefficient of .345 which has a significance level of .05. It would appear that those beginners who are the most active in learning are also those judged most highly competent.

Table 5

Total Hours of Learning Experiences for 24 Beginning Teachers and Principal's Judgment of Competence

Subject	Hours of Learning	Principal's Rating
1	951	3.9
2	764	4.0
3	566	4.2
4	516	4.3
5	483	4.1
6	482	3.5
7	440	3.3
8	427	4.3
9	413	3.8
10	401	4.4
11	328	4.0
12	327	3.1
13	317	3.7
14	295	3.6
15	268	3.4
16	225	3.6
17	174	3.8
18	114	3.3
19	108	3.7
20	102	3.3
21	72	2.9
22	56	3.2
23	40	3.3
24	32	3.4

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this investigation, we studied the learning experiences of beginning teachers. Using fairly conservative definitions and decision rules, we found that the learning experiences provided for and sought by a representative sample of secondary teachers in one state could be divided into 18 categories and that the amount of participation in learning activities by beginners was rather extensive and perhaps greater than would have been predicted. Beginning teachers tend to discriminate in their judgments about the various types of learning experiences available and report that where a learning experience is held, the type of person who provides leadership and the nature of the incentives offered make a difference in the amount of satisfaction they derive from the experience and how applicable they see it to their teaching. Inspection of individual cases within the sample illustrates that beginners vary greatly in the amount they participate in deliberate learning and the pattern for each is somewhat unique. At the same time, a characteristic that avid participants have in common as contrasted with less avid and reluctant participants is that they are perceived as more competent by their principals.

In no way do we want to be pretentious about these data. The sample, although randomly selected, is small and made up from the graduates from one institution who started their teaching careers in one state. At the same time, we believe this information begins to

fill in some of the gaps about beginners' learning and has practical implications in several situations.

First, the shear amount of time devoted to deliberate, professionally-related learning by beginning teachers needs highlighted. Joyce and his colleagues (1977) report that the policy-makers in their national sample expressed "skepticism" about teachers' desire for inservice education unless compiled. Others (Houle, 1980, for example) hold to the view that "too few professionals continue to learn . . . (and) that opportunities . . . are less abundant than they should be" (p. 303). However, if the reports of beginning teachers in our sample are accurate and representative, the whole notion of teacher resistance may be overstated. For example, the average teacher in our sample spent almost 300 hours over the first three years of teaching in deliberate learning activities. The magnitude of this 300 hours becomes more significant when contrasted with several other pieces of information.

- Excluding student teaching, and counting only face-to-face instructional time the beginning teacher was required to take only 240 hours in their preservice teacher training program at the institution in which they graduated (8 classes x 30 hours per class).

- To obtain permanent certification in the state where the sample was drawn, beginning secondary teachers are required to complete additional study that figures out to be approximately 75 clock hours per year (2.5 classes x 30 hours per class).

- Castle and Story (1968) in a study of physicians in Utah, estimate that doctors spend about 180 hours per year on continuing education although only 55 hours of this was spent on meetings and courses; the rest included reading, contact with colleagues, group rounds and the like.

The fact that the average beginning teacher spends approximately 100 hours per year on deliberate learning and a large portion much more than that, makes even more strongly the case that beginners do indeed continue as learners.

Second, the impression that continuing education is impoverished and/or dominated by the traditional provider, higher education, may need to be reconsidered. It would appear that even though night classes and summer school account for the largest proportion of hours of learning experiences for beginners, that certainly many other types of learning activities exist and these are sought by new teachers. In fact the pattern that exists can best be characterized as one in which a large supermarket of learning experiences exist from which individual teachers pick and choose.

Third, the attitudes expressed by beginners toward specific learning experiences may help pinpoint a bit more accurately sources of dissatisfaction which up to now have been expressed about and directed toward continuing education in general. For example, the types of learning experiences that received the most favorable responses were those that were highly individualized (one-to-one technical assistance and observations of other teachers teaching) or very practical (solving particular problems and developing classroom materials in clinics and workshops). Of some interest, but perhaps not surprising when we think about it a moment, was the universally high favorable responses to experiences when beginners themselves were asked to make presentations, perform or provide leadership for a

learning event. What is a little disconcerting was the small amount of learning experiences that fall into these categories as compared to those that receive less favorable responses.

Beginners' attitudes toward the location of learning experiences perhaps explode a myth. The common wisdom during the past several years is that providers of learning experiences will be more successful if they take that experience to the teacher's place of work. Recognizing that many other factors are involved, that was not true of the beginners in our sample. In fact the farther away from home the learning experience, the more satisfied teachers were with it and the more applicable they saw it to their teaching. Could it be that teachers, like other professionals, find satisfaction from attending professional conferences and other kinds of learning experiences that allow them to interact with a larger community of colleagues and escape the parachocialism that exists in daily routine.

The data obtained in this sample of beginners as to the type of trainers that produce most favorable attitudes confirm data collected by Bruce Joyce and his colleagues (1977) that college personnel and administrators or curriculum specialists from the district's central office are the least preferred. They also reveal that teachers themselves and consultants are the most preferred. What perhaps is most interesting is the high satisfaction and ratings of applicability received from learning experiences that had more than one type of trainer. Closer analysis of these experiences show a common pattern -- a clinic, workshop or conference led by teams consisting of consultants,

in some instances higher education personnel acting as private consultants, and teachers themselves. Could a trend be emerging that whereas organizations themselves have not been highly successful in developing and delivering collaborative learning experiences that the individuals within various provider organizations have found the efficacy of joining together?

The results about incentives also prove interesting in several ways. One, it would appear that a sizable portion of the learning experiences were taken by beginners for personal satisfaction or professional growth and that these produced very high ratings of satisfaction and applicability. It is also quite clear that very different attitudes exist toward a learning experience if it is engaged in voluntarily as contrasted to compulsory attendance. As with multi-trainers, it appears that multi-incentives produce a degree of satisfaction and applicability not rivaled by single incentives alone.

Finally, inspection of the individual learning profiles and the fact that those beginners rated most competent are also those that are the most avid participants in learning have implication for policy makers concernedwith continuing education. Each beginner's learning appears to be the product of individual decisions as compared to decisions made in mutual agreement with others. Perhaps, what we find with the learning experiences of beginning teachers is similar to what we find with other aspects of teachers' work -- the autonomous professional working alone. Many features of this pattern

are probably desirable. For instance, it provides teachers with opportunities to design their own learning agenda, to choose experiences that best match their own perceived needs, and it keeps the primary responsibility for learning on the individual. At the same time, several of the beginners in our sample did not continue to participate in learning. In fact, those that could benefit most from additional learning fall into this category. The challenge, perhaps, is what type of policies offer rewards and aid for the docile learner without destroying the pattern of those beginners who already on their own attend to their learning needs?

REFERENCES

Arends, R. I. "Secondary Teacher Preparation Program: University of Oregon Procedures for Program Evaluation." In Hord, S. M. and Hall, G. E. (eds.), Teacher Education Program Evaluation and Follow-up Studies: A Collection of Current Efforts. Austin: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, 1979.

Arends, R. I. and Bullock, T. "Evaluation Design for Secondary Teacher Preparation Program." Eugene: University of Oregon, 1976.

Arends, R. I., Hesse, K., Wheeler, S. and Garrett, J. Evaluation Report of the Secondary Teacher Education Program. Eugene: University of Oregon, 1978.

Castle, C. H. and Storey, P. B. "Physicians' Needs and Interests in Continuing Education." Journal of the American Medical Association. (206), 1968.

Isaacson, Nancy. A Description of the Nature and Extent of Perceived Support by Beginning Secondary Teachers. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Oregon, 1981.

Isaacson, N., Arends, R. I. et al. Evaluation Report of the Secondary Teacher Education Program. Eugene: University of Oregon, 1981.

Joyce, B. et al. Inservice Teacher Education. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, 1976.

Lortie, D. C. School Teacher. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

McDonald, F. et al. The Study of Induction Programs for Beginning Teachers. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1980.

Ryan, K. et al. Biting the Apple: Accounts of First Year Teachers. New York: Longman, Inc., 1980.

Tough, A. "Major Learning Efforts: Recent Research and Future Directions." Adult Education. (28), 1978.

Tough, A. The Adult's Learning Projects. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1971.